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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a descriptive analysis of preservice secondary social studies teachers' perspectives toward teaching in general and social studies education in particular. Twenty-five students majoring in social studies education at a large midwestern university during 1984-85, representing four major phases of the teacher education program were selected to participate. Field experiences are the most valuable part of the teacher education program according to this study. An individual's perspective may be viewed as his or her underlying rationale or theory of action. The naturalistic inquiry paradigm was used to construct the development of preservice teachers. An individual's teaching perspective is the product of his or her interaction with the teacher education program, early field experiences, and personal history biography. Continued involvement with the subject area and working with young people were the most frequently cited reasons for choosing teaching. The participants' conception of the primary purpose of social studies was to transfer knowledge and provide students with a well-rounded knowledge base. The type of knowledge considered most important for a successful teaching experience was command of general social studies content. (SM)

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Preservice Teachers' Perspectives Toward Secondary Social Studies Education

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Preservice Teachers' Perspectives Toward Secondary Social Studies Education

INTRODUCTION

A review of research on teacher education completed by Fuller and Bown (1975) concluded that, "despite the need for theory building and conceptualization of the processes of change during teacher preparation, adequate theories are still not available" (p. 41). The major reason usually cited for this inadequacy is that too little is known about what actually goes on during teacher preparation (Fuller & Bown, 1975; Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981). This shortcoming is being addressed by a relatively new line of research on the process of becoming a teacher--the study of teacher perspectives.

Investigations into the process of becoming a teacher should have a dual focus, including both the context of learning to teach and the teachers' perceptions of that task (Fuller & Bown, 1975). The elements of the context include: peers, teacher educators, cooperating teachers, pupils, characteristics of preservice teachers, and institutional settings. As a result of their apprenticeship of observation as pupils, the values, attitudes, and milieu associated with teaching are not new to prospective teachers. To become a teacher, then, does not require the acquisition of previously unknown values as much as it requires a change in the individual's own relationship to the classroom situation (Lacey, 1977). This process of change is illustrated by the development of teacher perspectives, which are the meanings and interpretations that teachers give to their work and their work situation (Adler, 1984).

The construct of "perspectives" was first developed by Becker, Geer, Hughes, and Strauss (1961) in a study of socialization into the medical profession. Adler (1984) described perspectives as, "the operational

philosophy developed out of experiences in the immediate and distant past, and applied to specific situations" (p. 14). An individual's perspective may be viewed as his or her underlying rationale or theory of action. Teacher perspectives, then, take into account a broad range of factors, including the teacher's background, beliefs, assumptions, the context of the classroom and the school, how these elements are interpreted, and the interpretations' influence on the teacher's actions.

Several studies have been conducted that rely in whole or in part on the investigation of teacher perspectives (e.g., Adler, 1984; Goodman & Adler, 1985; Tabachnick, Popkewitz, & Zeichner, 1979-1980; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1985) and while the body of work is small, it is growing. Among other things, these studies have illustrated that the development of specific perspectives is related to individual's biography, university teacher education programs, and the characteristics of classrooms and schools used in early field experiences and student teaching. This paper presents a descriptive analysis of preservice secondary social studies teachers' perspectives toward teaching in general and social studies education in particular. While most previous studies of teacher perspective development have examined elementary teachers, this study focused on preservice secondary teachers.

METHODS AND DATA SOURCES

Because this study explored individual teacher perspectives, the researcher believed it was necessary to use a methodology that allowed for the incorporation of the ideas, actions, thoughts, and feelings of the participants themselves as the major focus of the inquiry. Considering the purpose of the study, the naturalistic research paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) provided the most appropriate framework for the design of the

inquiry. Previous research regarding professional socialization and the development of perspectives has demonstrated that qualitative research methods and a naturalistic theoretical perspective allow unanticipated phenomena to be investigated as they emerge (Friebus, 1977).

Students majoring in social studies education at a large midwestern public university during 1984-85 were the focus of the study. Twenty-five students representing each of the four major phases of the teacher education program at the university were selected to participated in the study. The sample included students from: (a) the freshman early field experience program, (b) the sophomore level professional introduction to education program, (c) the senior level secondary social studies methods courses, and (d) student teaching. Four students were selected to participate in a pilot study while the remainder participated in the primary investigation. The pilot study consisted of interviews that were open-ended, loosely structured, and focused on general schooling background, significant influences in the decision to teach, and general perceptions of teaching. Based upon the pilot interviews and previous ethnographic investigations of the professional socialization process (Becker et al., 1961; Lortie, 1975), an interview schedule was constructed for use in the primary investigation.

Interview sessions that ranged from one to two hours in length were conducted with the remaining 21 participants. Through the interviewing process, the researcher attempted to construct a story of the development of each individual as a preservice teacher. The interviews were similar to what Levinson (1978) calls biographical interviews and generally followed the established interview schedule, but were sensitive to and probed individual respondents' replies. The interviews focused on the development

of the individuals' teaching perspectives over time, particularly during the university teacher education program. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. The transcribed interview data were analyzed using a modified version of the constant comparative method of data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Miles and Huberman, 1984). Data categories and patterns were identified, defined, and then compared across individuals and groups. The patterns and categories of data were continuously refined or linked to other classes of phenomena. In order to add meaning to the coding process, marginal remarks and memos were used to point out important issues that codes might have been blurring and to suggest new interpretations, leads, and connections between and among particular categories.

Respondents participated in follow-up interviews, where the researcher shared specific patterns that emerged from the study as well as tentative conclusions. The respondents were given an opportunity to confirm, modify, or challenge the information in a summary of the study's preliminary findings. The major means through which the credibility of the findings was established included: (a) triangulation techniques, including a variety of data sources (audio tapes, transcriptions, follow-up interviews, brief written biographical surveys), (b) field notes and research journal of the researcher, (c) member checks (i.e., the clarification of questions and responses during and after the interviews, and the sharing of interview transcripts, working hypotheses, and interpretations with respondents).

FINDINGS

The data analysis resulted in perspective profiles of individuals and sample groups. The profiles are based on a grounded framework, that is, the major components of the teacher perspectives as presented in the

profiles were not based upon a predetermined framework, but emerge during the data analysis.

The four major components of the teacher perspectives profiles included: (a) motivations for entering the teaching profession, (b) beliefs about the role, function and practices of teachers, (c) views on the process of learning to teach, and (d) conceptions of the nature and purpose of social studies education. The paper presents findings regarding each of these components. The following selected observations are representative of findings regarding the latter two components of preservice teachers' perspectives.

Overview of the Setting

The setting of the study was a large midwestern public university. The university offers 34 programs for undergraduate education majors and is accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. Graduates of the secondary social studies education program receive a comprehensive certificate that allows them to teach history and the social sciences in grades 7-12. During the 1984-1985 academic year the social studies education program accounted for 7.7% (55 of 717) of the graduates of the college of education.

The teacher education program is heavily field experience oriented. The college offers an early experience program to provide prospective education majors the opportunity to explore teaching before applying for admission to the college. The freshman early field experience program (FEEP) provides prospective teachers the opportunity to work in a school setting for 16 hours a week throughout a ten week quarter. Field experiences are supplemented by a weekly on-campus seminar.

The professional education requirements include course work in foundations, introductory pedagogy and educational psychology, and special methods courses. After admission to the college, students continue their field experience by enrolling in the professional introduction program (PI). This sequence of two 6-quarter-hour courses is designed to introduce students to the study of teaching at all grade levels. The emphasis of the PI program--the concepts, skills, and problems of teaching--is supplemented by 120 clock hours of field experiences. After completing the second course in the PI sequence and appropriate courses in their teaching field, students are eligible to enroll in the social studies methods course sequence. Following successful completion of the social studies methods courses, students may enroll for student teaching, which is conducted over a 10 week quarter. The distribution of course requirements in this program is similar to the typical secondary education programs found at other teacher education institutions (Kluender, 1984). However, this program requires more field experience and course work in the teaching field and less course work in the liberal arts than the average secondary education program. Figure 1 graphically illustrates this comparison.

Preservice Teachers' Perspectives

The data of this study support the hypothesis that teacher socialization is a dialectical process. The development of particular teacher perspectives by preservice social studies teachers is an outcome of the socialization process and evolves from several sources of influence. The development of preservice teachers' perspectives is affected by their preservice teacher education experiences, but the changes in their beliefs and attitudes that occur are not deep internal changes. Teachers' perspectives seem to be the result of three separate sets of forces: (a)

the social structural variables prospective teachers encounter in universities and schools, (b) the individual's personal biography, and (c) the individual's active mediation of the interaction between the first two sets of variables. A major finding of this study was that an individual's teaching perspective is the product of his or her interaction with the social structural elements of the schools, university teacher education, and his or her personal biography.

Social structural variables determine the program organization of teacher education, the perspectives the preservice teachers are exposed to in field experiences, the type of experiences the preservice teachers are allowed to have, as well as the knowledge and skills they acquire during their university education. Social structural variables also include experiences preservice teachers had as pupils in elementary and secondary schools, where they closely observed the actions of teachers for many years. Personal biography of the individual also functions as a structural variable, placing certain constraints on the individual's actions and beliefs in light of past experiences.

Preservice teachers were not found to be passive recipients of the constraints placed upon them by social structures. Instead, preservice teachers were found to be mediators and creators of values, playing an active role in the construction of their own identities as teachers. Preservice teachers play a part in the resistance to and transformation of the prevailing social structures. This dialectic between individuals and social structures is illustrated by the existence of several interactional processes including: (a) role-playing, (b) selective role-modeling, (c) impression management, and (d) self-legitimation.[1] Through this dialectical process, preservice teachers developed theories of action or

perspectives that guided their actions as teachers. The remainder of the paper is devoted to describing the nature of the teaching perspectives held by the participants in this study.

The interview data produced information regarding the teacher perspectives of respondents as they related to four general areas: (a) motivations for teaching, (b) images of teachers and teaching, (c) conceptions of the nature and purpose of social studies, and (d) the process of learning to teach.

Motivations for Teaching

In Lortie's (1975) study of the schoolteacher, he identified six attractive elements of the work of teachers: working with young people; pride in performing important public service; ease of entry, exit, and re-entry; time compatibility; modest material benefits; and psychic rewards resulting from student achievement. Of these six motivations for teaching, only one was mentioned by more than 25% of the respondents in this study, that is, working with young people (by 61% of the respondents). Some representative comments by respondents include the following (codes following interview excerpts identify individual respondents and their status in the program):

> I would like to feel like I had a part in the outcome of students...that I had some kind of influence over kids...to be there when they needed someone. After all, they are in school six hours a day....I think they [the students] would become your family after a while. (FEEP/3)

> I get personal gratification out of helping other people and I feel great when I help somebody else understand things....As far as the kids are concerned, I really enjoy being around people--younger kids--because the thing I have realized now that I am in college is that they are going through the same stuff that I went through and they have a lot to expect in the future. So, I'm trying to help them get their act together. (FEEP/4)

In addition to working with young people, a strong desire to stay involved with the subject area (almost always identified as history, not social studies) was expressed by the respondents.

> I saw teaching as an opportunity to continue learning about history and, not only that, but, to use whatever talent I may have toward historical interpretation and to be looked upon by students who might be interested [in history] as somebody who knows something. (SSM/4)

> I am interested in the subject matter....My personal library is about history and social sciences...and I've been interested in it since junior high...I've been interested in learning all my life. I don't want it to stop once I walk out of here with my diploma. I am hoping that I could give somebody a spark so they would want to learn for the rest of their life--not just in my class. (ST/1)

> I guess the largest attraction was being involved in something that I enjoyed--something that I enjoyed hearing. History and geography were the primary attractions. I realized there were a few things you would have to do outside the classroom preparing, but I thought that would be something I would enjoy preparing for since a lot of my spare time I spend doing that anyway. (SSM/2)

In addition to the motivations described above, respondents noted opportunities to coach sports (28%), summer vacations (23%), and the absence of manual labor as attractions of teaching as an occupation.

For most respondents, there did not seem to be any specific event or series of events that resulted in a desire to become a teacher, although respondents generally described elementary and secondary school experiences as being positive, especially with regard to their success in social studies courses. Few had had experiences working with young people prior to entering teacher education. Ten of the respondents had entered college with a major other than social studies education and six of the respondents were in college to retrain, after having careers outside the field of education (including: law, communications, contracting, criminal justice, military, and heavy industry). For those involved in an effort to retrain for a new career, the most often cited reason for the change to education was the perceived opportunity for more job satisfaction.

> It wasn't so much a negative response to the previous career, but there may have been some...I don't know....I wasn't that dissatisfied with a law career, it's just that I didn't see myself doing that for 20 years. I wanted to get something where you get more satisfaction out of [what you do]. Maybe it had to do with working in that segment of the law; I wasn't real satisfied with the work. (SSM/2)

For those changing careers to become teachers, the "eased entry" (Lortie, 1975) of the profession was frequently a factor in their decisions. The relatively short time needed to become certified and the perceived lack of arduousness of the teacher education program, combined with the opportunity to work in a career that would provide professional fulfillment attracted these individuals from what were, in some cases, higher paying and more prestigious jobs.

In summary, the strongest motivations for becoming teachers seemed to come from the respondents' desires to continue their studies in the social sciences, particularly history. For most, there was no "conversion" experience, but past success in school, particularly in social studies classes, was a positive influence.

Images of Teachers and Teaching

Included in descriptions of their perceptions of the role of teachers were respondents' images of themselves as teachers. These images provide an interesting linkage to the respondents' motivations for teaching, as well as the influences of the teacher education experiences and past school experiences (which will be discussed later in this paper). The expressed images of self as teacher fall into three categories: teacher-as-counselor, teacher-as-expert, teacher-as-role model.

The teacher-as-counselor image was expressed frequently by those respondents that identified the desire to work with young people as their motivation for teaching.

You are with these students for six hours a day. You have got to

> relate to their problems. They have got more wild things coming up that you have got to be able to handle and realize...be prepared to deal with. (PI/2)
>
> Relating to the student when you are not teaching. Being there like a...I don't want to say counselor, but someone there that they can talk to, that kind of role. Just someone there for the students to talk to. Be a type of teacher that the student can look up to. But, yet they are having a good time and they are learning right along with it. (PI/4)
>
> I think you have to get close to the students...have more of an openness. Be on more of a personal or friendship basis. (SSM/5)
>
> You want to make yourself available. Sometimes I feel you have got to get away from the strict teacher-student thing. You have to make yourself available for other things...to talk about other things...other problems, not always school. (SSM/1)
>
> Sometimes surrogate parent. Sometimes priest-confessor. Disciplinarian...which is what I didn't like, but had to do several times. Authority figure...they have to have some respect for authority. I wouldn't want to be seen just as a vacuous little vehicle spitting out knowledge. (ST/1)

Other respondents imagined their role as teacher as being the person that facilitates the discovery of new knowledge on the part of students, and serves as the "expert" in his or her field.

> [My role as a teacher is] basically to introduce the student to learning that particular discipline...history. To get that class or student involved in that for 48 minutes or however long. Hopefully they will come away with something. Not every student has to walk away from every subject overwhelmed with it....I don't think it is a teacher's job to make the students feel good about themselves. That is not part of the job description in my book. (SSM/4)

Several respondents imagine their role as teacher as being a role model for the students.

> Many times student see you as a role model. If you are dressed up nicely and neatly everyday...know the material and come in and act professionally. They might not get this at home and it is good for them to see a network of teachers that hopefully are like this so they will know who the professionals are in the real world and who they are. I think it is good to have people look to you as the role model. (ST/5)

> I think it is a chance to mold and shape people and a chance for social immortality, that is, to pass on something of yourself to other people...to make an impression. (ST/2)

Respondents were given descriptions of three types of roles teachers may take with regard to the school curriculum and asked to identify the category that would be most representative of the role they would take in the classroom when they began teaching. The three role descriptions were labeled: "teacher as technician," "teacher as modifier," and "teacher as creator." Three identified the "technician" and only one chose the "creator" category. The remaining 17 respondents described themselves as curriculum modifiers, that is, following the textbook and the graded course of study and supplementing where they felt the need. All but one respondent noted that being a curriculum creator would not be a realistic goal for a beginning teacher, because of a lack of confidence regarding the mastery of the subject matter and the fact that beginning teachers should not be viewed as "new people trying to change the system."

> I like structure. I like to be in an environment where things aren't flying around. Where there is a chain of order and some guidelines pertaining to curriculum and materials, but I like to have the freedom to be able to modify and change things as I see fit. I don't want to deviate terribly from the established order or cause a revolution. (ST/2)

> You have got to go a little bit by the book until you get your feet wet and see what works. I think to be truly creative you have to have been there for a while, know your work, and have seniority. I think if you go in there right away [and become a creator of curriculum] they'll say this person can't follow directions or anything. It would really be suicide in that case. (ST/5)

> I would want to place myself in the curriculum creator category, but I think when I first get out I'm going to be so scared and I'm going to be afraid to go off and do my own thing. Other teachers [may be] talking about and criticizing me. I haven't been there long enough [as a beginning teacher] to do some things that they might not approve of. I'm not that daring. Maybe later on, but I think my first year I would probably want everything just so-so and by the book. (PI/4)

When preservice teachers described their beliefs regarding appropriate teaching strategies for secondary social studies classroom, the emphasis was on avoiding techniques that would be "boring" for the students. The focus was on using a variety of strategies and incorporating the active participation of students through group work, simulations and games, or by allowing the students to participate in choosing the topics of study.

> I would hope that I would go to other sources and get different ideas. I would not keep the class strictly structured, but allow for some change...do something new and add variety to my classes. (FEEP/3)

> I think I would be a good teacher because I wouldn't stick to just one pattern. I think if you had the same thing day after day it would become the most boring thing...it would be boring for you and your students. So I would try different techniques and approaches and if something doesn't work you have to keep on going because if you are doing a lecture and you see your lecture is putting half the people to sleep, you can't be afraid to change. (ST/5)

Comparing the respondents' stated beliefs about teaching practices and an analysis of the actual teaching strategies they used during field experiences illustrates a contradiction between respondents' stated beliefs and actions. All 21 respondents relied primarily on a lecture/recitation format when teaching in university sponsored field experiences. Respondents did supplement their lectures with other methods including: films and visuals (62%), small group assignments (24%), workbooks/worksheets (19%), and simulation/inquiry methods (14%).[2]

In summary, the respondents possessed distinct images of themselves has teachers and had clear-cut ideas of the role they would play in the classroom. The most frequently described teacher images were: (a)

teacher-as-counselor, (b) teacher-as-expert, and (c) teacher-as-role model. Respondents typically described their role as a teacher as being a modifier of the extant curriculum, although, many expressed the desire to develop skills that would allow them to be more creative and produce their own curriculum materials. The data also illustrated inconsistencies regarding respondents' actions in field experiences and their stated beliefs about appropriate teaching practices.

Beliefs About the Nature and Purpose of Social Studies

Throughout the interviews, respondents expressed beliefs and ideas about what social studies is and why it ought to be taught. Respondents' conceptions of the purpose of social studies in the school curriculum could generally be grouped into two categories: (a) transfer of cultural knowledge to younger generations and (b) development of students with a well-rounded knowledge base and the ability to think critically. The latter of these two categories was the most commonly mentioned purpose of social studies in the curriculum. Many respondents noted that social studies held a unique and important place in the school curriculum as a forum for the expression of student ideas and beliefs and the critical examination of opinions held by other people. Their statements regarding the purpose of the social studies many times revealed naive conceptions of other subject areas.

> One of the most essential roles for the social studies teacher is to get the students to think...not just learn whatever the subject matter is, but to think behind the causes [of an event] and how it has a bearing on our lives today. How what they learned from the past can be applied [today]....As far as getting students to think critically about society and the role of society, I guess that's primarily the responsibility of the social studies teacher. It wouldn't apply as much to math or physical education. (SSM/2)

> The difference between math and history is that courses in the social studies go beyond the classroom and classroom learning. You deal with government, you deal with how you are going to relate and deal with

> society after you have gone out of the classroom and in that respect social studies does have a larger role and a greater responsibility than, say, a math or a science class. A social studies teacher can be a great influence on a student's way of looking at the outside world--above and beyond the other things that he is influenced by, like television, the home situation, or friends. (ST/2)

> [Social studies teachers] have more of a chance to create dissonance--there is more of a chance to make the kids think, "Oh gee! Why is this happening? What can I do to change it? Why did the people let this happen?" (ST/1)

A small number of respondents (three) held the conventional view that the purpose of social studies in the school curriculum was to pass on the cultural content of the dominant society to the next generation. This belief about the purpose of the social studies was exemplified in the following statement made by a student in the freshman field experience program to justify the inclusion of social studies in the curriculum:

> I just feel that everyone should have a certain background of the country's history, the world's history. Where we have been and where we are going and how we got there...the revolution. (FEEP/5)

As a result of experiences in the field, one student in the social studies methods sequence decided he would not teach after graduation. He expressed concern over what he characterized as the "widespread" belief that social studies should teach the values and morals of the dominant society.

> It seems to me that you are expected to conform to a certain value system, and whether I disagree or agree with it is of no relevance. I don't like the idea of teaching people what is right and wrong....I'm not sure how to explain it....People have always expected the schools where they send their children to provide some sort of social control. I don't want to feel like I'm a factory stuffing kids into one end of a machine and having them come out like something else....Communities and school administrators--they want to teach more than just facts. They want you to teach values and morals. (SSM/4)

Preservice teachers seemed to have more difficulty articulating a conception of what social studies is than they did in describing why social studies should be taught. This is not surprising considering the ongoing

debate among social studies educators regarding this very question. Those respondents expressing a conception of the nature of the social studies (58%) can be categorized into four groups: (a) those who perceive the social studies as knowledge that is personally meaningful, (b) those for whom the social studies is history, (c) those who see social studies as part of an integrated curriculum, and (d) those who see social studies as citizenship education. Only one respondent expressed each of the latter two conceptions. Social studies as knowledge that is personally meaningful was a conception held by those who placed emphasis on providing the opportunity for students to explore their own opinions and the opinions of others on issues that are relevant to their lives.

> [Social studies] lets the student think for himself. Express himself. Express his ideas, his values. Rather than [the teacher saying], "this is what it is." (SSM/5)

> [Within social studies] there is so much to learn and there is so much that is applicable to real life situations. There are a lot of conflicts in society and high school kids would be more interested in something that they can see and read about every day instead of something that is cut and dried--like math. In social studies, you've got to let kids express themselves. You don't have to have a right or wrong answer. (SSM/1)

The conception of social studies as history also yielded a surprising glimpse of the nature of history as conceived by the respondents.

> A history teacher pretty much has it set...there is no way his lesson plans are going to change. History is history, but I think each year he should bring about a new way of doing it. Not just use the same lesson plans every year. (PI/4)

> In history, there is nothing you can change. There is very little deviation. (FEEP/3)

> I would say social studies is less open to question in general than is science. There are still going to be questions. There are going to be people who have never experienced the lesson. I guess with social studies you don't have to have quite as open-minded as you do in science....Social studies, I feel, is pretty much cut and dried. It has happened. It is not going to change. It has already happened, so let's work on it....The question is: How did we do it, and what were the battles involved? (FEEP/5)

In summary, a majority of the respondents described the purpose of social studies in the school curriculum as being either (a) to transfer cultural knowledge to younger generations or (b) the development of students with a well-rounded knowledge base and the ability to think critically. Respondents experienced difficulty in describing the nature of the social studies. The two most frequent conceptions of social studies expressed by the respondents were (a) social studies as personally meaningful knowledge and (b) social studies as the study of history.

Perspectives on Learning How to Teach

Four areas stand out in the analysis of respondents perspectives' on how one learns to teach. These areas include: (a) the change from a student-perspective to a teacher-perspective, (b) the perceived knowledge and skills requisite for successful teaching, and (c) responses to the teacher education curriculum.

From student to teacher perspective. In 1975, Lortie described the years teachers spent as students in elementary and secondary schools as the apprenticeship of observation. During his or her 16 years of general schooling and over 13,000 hours of contact with classroom teachers, the prospective teacher has developed a definite idea about the nature of the teacher's role. Lortie acknowledges the limitations of this apprenticeship, due particularly to the fact that the student views the teacher from one particular vantage point--a point that does not offer insight into the problems of teaching. The student is the "target" of the teacher's actions and, therefore, as Lortie points out, takes the perspective of an audience viewing a play the student is not privy to the goings on backstage.

> I still haven't looked upon myself as being a teacher. My primary concern is still as a student. (SSM/4)
>
> It's [teaching] hard because I when got up in front of the class I felt like I was a student too and I felt like one of them. But, I would like to think that in professional courses I would feel more like a professional. I would feel more like I was part of the work force. (FEEP/3)
>
> When I approach the classroom as a teacher, I look at things to point out to students...where as a student, I look at it as some things that I want to learn myself....You have to have a broader perspective [as a teacher]. (FEEP/5)
>
> [As a student] I would say I was just part of the crowd. I wasn't different from anybody else. Being a teacher, you are the head honcho. You are in the classroom and you've got to keep everything going. It's going to be hard for me because I am kind of shy and I kind of keep to myself. It's going to be hard letting myself out and trying to get those kids involved. I will have some problems there, but that is just going to take time. (PI/4)
>
> I've seen things from the other side of the desk. I've seen some of the things that I thought I got away with as a student and [now] I don't think I did [get away with it]. Looking over someone's paper or passing notes or talking. Teachers are real people too. They have more going on in their lives. Teaching is a lot of hard work. It is a lot harder that I thought it would be. (ST/2)

Interpreting the classroom from a teacher's perspective was a problem not limited to preservice teachers in the earliest stages of their professional education.

Perceived knowledge and skills requisite for successful teaching. The type of knowledge considered most important for a successful and effective social studies teaching experience, by the overwhelming majority of respondents (86%), was a command of content area knowledge, particularly history and the social sciences. But many respondents also felt that a broad exposure to other content areas--in essence a liberal arts background--was a requisite for all teachers.

> History teachers should know history very well. I mean it is something you should keep abreast of. Never say, "Well, I know enough. I've taught three years and I'm going to use the same outlines. Kids will ask the same questions, so I'll never have to study any differently." I think it is something you always have to

update, especially with kids today getting smarter. (ST/4)

I feel that a younger teacher without a good subject background would be more apt to be criticized because of the simple reason that he might be afraid somebody might pop up a question he couldn't answer...A well prepared teacher, I feel, is more respected by the students. The students are more apt to respect and want to learn from some one that is well prepared. (FEEP/5)

While almost all the respondents were convinced of the primary importance of mastering the content area one was planning to teach, many also pointed out that expertise in a subject area did not necessarily make one an effective teacher. To illustrate this point, several mentioned university course work in which the instructor obviously had a strong grasp of the content, but was unable to convey a similar understanding to the students. The abilities to "relate to students", "have a caring attitude", or "be able to communicate ideas", were mentioned by 90% of the respondents as the first or second most important skills to master for success in the classroom.

I believe that being able to understand students is the most important thing because the knowledge is there in the text and I could go through a chapter and write down the notes that I would need to teach the class. You do not necessarily have to know the facts, but being able to communicate with the students--interact with the students--would be more important than just conveying facts or knowing the facts. (FEEP/1)

Respondents frequently described personality characteristics instead of specific knowledge or skills as critical to success as a classroom teacher. Qualities considered important included: tolerance of dissenting opinions, flexibility, sensitivity to others, enthusiasm about work, and creativity. Only three respondents mentioned the importance of teaching techniques used (including two student teachers and one social studies methods student) and only two mentioned the importance of classroom management abilities (one of which was a student teacher). Emerging from the respondents' discussion about the requisite knowledge and skills of

teaching was the widespread belief that personality characteristics were more important to success in the classroom than any particular knowledge or skills that might be taught during teacher education.

> I think your personality is going to make you a better teacher than all the knowledge in the world. I really do. It's a talent [successful teaching]; I think it's just as much of a talent as is being a musician. You can learn all kinds of technical things, but if you don't have the talent, you can go ahead and play the notes, but you're not going to hear the same soul....It doesn't matter how many times you send someone off for training...it's not going to change their personality...I don't think you can totally learn to teach, I think that a lot of people just couldn't do it. I think it has a lot to do with your personality....You have certain potentials, certain capabilities...so if you don't have it, no matter what the university does, they're not going to make a teacher out of somebody who really should be wearing a lab coat and locked in a room somewhere with test tubes. (ST/6)

Teaching and learning to teach were portrayed as very personal, individualistic, and natural processes. The key to learning to teach for most respondents was to "know yourself" and have the ability to draw upon natural abilities (personality).

> I think teachers should have a basic insight into themselves and other people. They have got to know themselves and know their abilities, their limitations, their prejudices and be able to effectively communicate what it is that they are suppose to teach. (SSM/4)

> Personality...I know that has got to have a lot to do with being an effective teacher. A lot of the things I have done in the classroom was from my own experience as a parent. A year ago, I probably couldn't explain why I did those things. Now that I have read the textbooks for my education courses, I can give formal names to what I did. (PI/2)

> They asked us what we thought a teacher should do [in certain situations] and everything everyone said was right. I agreed with everything they said. It is going to be different for everybody. No one is the same. No one is going to teach the same way. No matter how much I want to be like the cooperating teacher I had in FEEP, I'm never going to be exactly like him. (PI/4)

In summary, the requisite knowledge and skills of teaching were conceived as being highly personal and individualistic. That is, respondents viewed the knowledge base of teaching as being relativistic and

individualistic. A utilitarian perspective dominated the respondents' beliefs regarding teaching. The attitude expressed was, "what is right is what works for you and what you feel comfortable doing." This attitude seemed to be encouraged by the discussions often held in teacher education courses, in which students freely expressed their beliefs and ideas regarding teaching and learning without having their statements critically examined by the instructor or other prospective teachers. Field experiences also contributed to this point of view by encouraging an apprenticeship orientation to the classroom that stressed mastery of instructional and management techniques while de-emphasizing any critical examination of what was done in the classroom.

Responses to the teacher education curriculum. Preservice teachers' expectations for what they would encounter in the teacher education curriculum were either negative or non-existent. Lanier and Little (1986) have noted that low and/or negative expectations of teacher education, "reflect an awareness that teacher education is easy to enter, intellectually weak, and possibly unnecessary" (p. 542). Several students in this study stated that they chose teacher education as a major after they had difficulty in other disciplines. Education was "supposed to be an easy major." The following statements reflect the generally low level of expectations many preservice teachers had of teacher education upon admission to the college of education.

> I really wasn't sure what to expect. Because the more I thought about it the more I wondered what it could be all about. So I kind of went into it without expectations. (SSM/4)

> I thought [teacher education courses would be] more or less like other classrooms where we would sit down and the teacher would say, "this is what I did and this is the best way to do it." (SSM/1)

> I didn't know [what to expect]. I really didn't know. I really wasn't well-grounded as to what to expect. I thought it would be a lot harder than it was. (ST/2)
>
> I was expecting a list...a teacher should do this, a teacher should do this.... (PI/4)

It should be noted that expectations were much lower and more negative for the course work than for other parts of the teacher education program, particularly field-related experiences. Low initial expectations were not significantly improved until students reached the special methods course work in social studies, which was the most valued portion of teacher education course work. Respondents reported high expectations for student teaching as well as other field experiences. (Other aspects of the curriculum of field experiences will be examined later in this section.)

General methods and foundations courses (such as the professional introduction to education sequence) were characterized by the majority of respondents as much less useful than the social studies methods courses. The major complaint regarding general methods and foundations courses was that they did not provide information that was readily applicable in the secondary social studies classroom. Respondents felt that although the courses addressed important issues, they had not acquired or practiced any skills that would make them adept at handling typical classroom problems and events.

> I don't think I learned how to discipline in the course. We learned that it was considered the number one problem in education, but not really how to deal with it. I don't even know if it's possible to teach that....It's hard to understand how these courses relate to teaching in the classroom. Some of it seems like theories you'll never use. (PI/5)
>
> I haven't learned a whole hell of a lot in my education classes....One class provided a perfect example of talking generically and talking specifically. There is a potential that in my classroom there will be children who have special needs....This was a perfect opportunity to talk to us and to say, "look—if you have a kid who has a hearing problem, you might want to think about taking these steps...." I would

> have liked to have seen some things like, "These are signs that indicate that a child doesn't hear well" and "Here are some things that you can do to make that child's education easier." Instead we went through elaborate justifications for the mainstreaming laws..." (SSM/3)

While the social studies methods courses were generally accepted as "more practical," respondents felt that they could be even more so by examining specific pedagogical situations instead of focusing on theories of instruction supported by isolated examples. Many of the students described a curriculum laboratory approach to teaching social studies methods as one way of making the courses more easily applicable.

> Somewhere along the line, every social studies teacher is going to have to teach the history of the United States....I don't see any place in the college of education that gives me any idea of how to do that. The college seems to be [focusing on] how to deal with teaching on a generic level...they seem to be afraid of talking about specifics....I want to have a methodology and it's fine to talk about reflective inquiry and give examples....But, I'm not so sure of how to adapt that to teaching about the American Revolution. Sure, I see a little, I see individual things emerging--we can use a simulation--but what about pulling it all together? I see those [examples] as little notches along a straight path....We have to come back to this because I haven't been taught to tie all of that together into some kind of methodology. (SSM/3)

> It's not specific enough as far as...Okay, here's a world history unit, you can approach it this way or this way...Okay, here's a psych unit, you can approach it like this or you can approach it like this. I mean, you just never get anything specific. It's just, well, you should use some transparencies if you feel like it and there's always film strips....In addition to having a methods textbook that says here are some different methods, you can apply them yourself, it would be nice to have a high school textbook....I think if you had the kind of course work that says here's an American history book and now we're going to use our theoretical methods and work with this material because it is what you have to do in real life...that would be great! (ST/6)

Only two respondents felt that more teacher education courses would be beneficial. Respondents generally failed to acknowledge the importance of mastering the empirical knowledge base of teaching. Two of the six student teachers in the study did admit that upon completing their student teaching quarter, they had a better understanding of the relevance of topics

discussed in all of their teacher education courses. As one student teacher put it:

> At the time I was taking it [teacher education course work] I didn't think I was learning that much from it. But, now that I've completed those classes and my student teaching, what was said makes so much more sense, and it helped me so much in my student teaching....(ST/5)

Field experiences dominated preservice teachers' descriptions of how they learn about teaching.

> Learning how to teach is getting actual experience--talking in front of the class of students, plus learning the right techniques that can be used. It's learning how to communicate with those students on a level they will understand. (SSM/2)

> The way I learned how to teach was I had to apply what I learned in the courses. I remember reading about this and being lectured to about it and now I have to sit down and actually do it. Reading about is was good, but doing it was better. (ST/1)

The reasons given for the significance of field experiences in learning how to teach varied. Field experience provided preservice teachers with the opportunity to: (a) evaluate their interests in teaching, (b) test out and practice their abilities as teachers, (c) begin developing a teacher's view of the classroom, and (d) experience concrete situations that could be linked to the abstract notions discussed in course work. Each of the following comments from respondents illustrates one of these reasons for the significance of field experiences.

> I went into FEEP not knowing if I wanted to go into the education field or not. I just wanted to try it out. I came out of there thinking this is what I really want to do. (PI/4)

> [Field experiences are significant] because there you are doing it. You learn directly from your mistakes. You see your mistakes much faster. I felt a lot of times in the classroom situation [at the university] a lot of the issues were based on opinion. Your answers were based on your opinion and it is easy to do that in a classroom. Anybody can fake that, as long as you know how to articulate in a clear-cut fashion. You can write the greatest essay in the world and it may mean nothing, but in the classroom it's a different story. There is nowhere to hide. If you goof-up, you goof-up. I think I learned faster and I realized my mistakes quicker [in the field]. I really made a lot of mistakes in the classroom in terms of opinions

that weren't well grounded and I hadn't realized them yet. (ST/2)

> Well, you see it from a different perspective than the students do, even thought you went there for four years in high school. And, you see a different light sitting on the side [during field experience] and not having to listen to the teacher's material. You can see what he does to handle the problems and what he's facing in grading papers and making up tests. How much material he has to cover in a certain amount of time. And, you also have the pressure of knowing the material that you have to teach. You get a close look at what they [teachers] know and what they go through. (PI/5)

> During field experiences, I probably had every--well maybe not every imaginable situation occur while I was either in front of the classroom or observing a classroom. That meant something that I don't think they can teach you here [at the university]. What to do in this or that situation. It's spontaneous--you can't take the time, like in education courses, to read over someone else's notes or read a book on what they did or something like that. (SSM/1)

Field experiences were found to vary greatly from person to person, even within the same field experience programs. These program inconsistencies seemed to be a function of the particular classroom/school situation within which the experience occurred and the particular personality or method of the cooperating teacher. For example, dramatic and sweeping differences existed in responsibilities for preservice teachers in FEEP. While the official purpose of FEEP was to enable preservice teachers to observe and take on minor teaching roles (usually including clerical tasks and teaching a few lessons during the ten week experience) three of the five respondents taught between 20 and 30 individual lessons. Because of the wide range of experiences within this one program, its impact on preservice teachers' perspectives was respectively varied. For most respondents, a positive FEEP experience served to confirm a career choice, for others the experience served as evidence that they were qualified to teach. Compare the following comments on the role of FEEP as assessed by two respondents; the first comment is from an individual who had taught only one lesson during FEEP, while the

latter comment comes from a respondent who had led 20 lessons.

> The purpose of FEEP was just seeing if that's what we really wanted to do. It was really an exploratory experience. We had a big meeting after it was all done and a couple of people said, "I don't want to teach anymore." I thought that was an important thing to find out. (PI/5)

> You can't really learn to teach out of a book. I thought it would be easy. My first lesson I had memorized. You've got to do it [teach] at least a few times before you can really master it, and then it's easy. (FEEP/2)

For most respondents, the early field experiences were significant in that from the experiences they confirmed their career choice and gained greater confidence in their ability to act in the teacher's role.

When teaching during early field experiences (not including student teaching), the respondents had few options other than to follow their cooperating teachers' guidelines. Some respondents were given the freedom to decide on the appropriate teaching strategies, but the cooperating teacher dictated the topics to be taught. Findings show that while cooperating teachers had a significant influence on the actions of preservice teachers in early field experiences, they had much less of influence on their perspectives. Respondents pointed out that in early field experiences, they followed the instructions of cooperating teachers, although, in many cases, they did not agree with them.

The student teaching experience presented a different set of circumstances than did the early field experiences. Student teachers were allowed more independence and the experience was perceived as more evaluation-oriented than exploratory. The student teaching experience was rated as the most valuable part of the teacher education program because it allowed students to try on the role of professional teacher. Several respondents noted that preservice teachers must "prove themselves" in ways unlike their counterparts in other disciplines. The unique role of the

education student is describe by two of the respondents in the following comments:

> It's different in the sense that we have the field experience like the people that are in the college of medicine. We have to go out and prove ourselves and I know the English students don't have to do that. The history students don't either. I was kind of depressed in a way my last quarter. Most graduating seniors have a nice easy ride through their last quarter. They don't have to push a lot of subjects. They take their finals and get out. I had to go though student teaching and that weighed on me fairly heavily. Boy, what a way to get out of a place. (ST/2)

> My role as a student was different. I was active in most of the methods classes...we had to do things, you couldn't just sit there and take notes....We had to actually prove ourselves, whereas in the liberal arts you really don't have to prove yourself. You read and write and that is fine. You don't have to really think, "Yeah, I can be a liberal arts major," and prove it. In teaching, if you are asked to prove it, you can. (ST/1)

In summary, the curriculum of field experience was found to be the most significant experience in respondents' teacher preparation. Practical experience in the field allowed preservice teachers to address several areas of concern including: (a) testing out interest in teaching as a career, (b) evaluating practical skills and abilities, (c) testing beliefs regarding teaching strategies and classroom procedures, and (d) providing concrete experiences to be linked with theories of education studied in course work. Most importantly, it was a real live exercise in dealing with human learning--the thing that was "just talk" at the university became the real thing in field experiences. It is not surprising that the only aspect of teacher education that the respondents did not feel there was enough of was experience in the classroom.

This study supports much of what Lortie (1975) asserts regarding the influence of schooling on the development of teacher perspectives, particularly regarding the naive, simplistic, and unproblematic view of teaching that respondents had upon entering teacher education. This was

illustrated in the respondents' views on the requisite knowledge and skills for successful teaching (examined earlier in this chapter), which were based more on personality than on pedagogical principles. It was also illustrated, by what respondents unexpectedly discovered during teacher education field experiences--that teaching is hard work and that clerical tasks take a significant portion of the teacher's time. Excerpts from the following five interviews illustrate changes in beliefs about the nature of teaching that occurred as a result of teacher education field experiences.

> I discovered the work load was a lot heavier than I thought it would be and that it takes more time that I thought it would. It is also more stressful than I thought it would be. Even with the summer vacation, during the rest of the year you work at it seven days a week. Every night and every weekend and all day during the week. (ST/1)

> I didn't expect the long hours a teacher really puts in. When I was doing my student teaching I was writing lesson plans and I was grading papers, getting material ready to run off the next day, preparing tests and I just really didn't realize all that was involved--all the time....I know it is a lot harder that I first thought. At first I thought some teachers just teach strictly by the textbook--[I thought it was just] a piece of cake for them. No preparation or anything. But, the ones that were real good teachers...I could tell now the preparation they had for class and I could go back now and point out the teachers who were real good--they prepared themselves and I didn't realize that before. (ST/5)

Preservice teachers do underestimate the problems and difficulties of teaching and this can be traced to the limited, but strong, preconceived beliefs that result from the apprenticeship of observation. Lortie couples this finding with the negative evaluation of teacher preparation given by participants in his study and describes teacher education as having little impact on teachers. However, while the underestimations of the difficulties of teaching by preservice teachers supports the notion that the apprenticeship of observation is a significant force in the socialization process, it does not completely rule out the growth and development of teacher perspectives as a result of teacher education

experiences. In fact, the "unexpected findings" reported above were the result of field experiences under the auspices of a teacher education program. The present study provides data that illustrate the greater pre-entry to post-entry changes in teacher perspectives than Lortie's data indicate. The data from this study indicate that although the influence of the apprenticeship of observation is strong, the growth and development of teacher perspectives during teacher education is influenced by teacher education course work, field experiences, and the active role of the individuals in mediating socialization forces, as well as the apprenticeship of observation.

CONCLUSION

This study examined one setting in which preservice teachers are engaged in particular roles. There are other broader ranging sources of influence that play a part in the development of teacher perspectives that have not been addressed in this research (i.e., the selection of teachers, economic factors, etc.). However, based upon the findings of this research, there are several recommendation that can be made.

First, the dialectical process of teacher perspective development illustrated in the findings above should be taken into account by reform-minded teacher educators when planning revisions of the present curriculum of teacher education. A better understanding of the dynamic of learning to teach, based upon the insights gained from preservice teachers, can assist reformers in the creation of a teacher education curriculum that is more meaningful to the prospective, as well as the practicing, teacher.

Second, a central problem of preservice teacher education, as it is presently organized, seems to be that its value depends upon the preservice teacher being properly prepared to learn from it. Course work in teacher

education should aim to make preservice teachers more aware of their own past experiences and preconceived beliefs about teaching in order to subject them to scrutiny. The goal would be not to disprove the relevancy of past experiences, but simply to expose individual beliefs to critical examination and discourage "personalized" versions of the teaching truth. Teacher educators should work to break down what Lortie (1975) described as the "intellectual segregation" between scientific reasoning and pedagogical practice. Based upon the findings in this research, it seems that teacher education has failed to meet the ideal expressed by Dewey (1904/1964) that, "criticism should be directed to making the professional student thoughtful about his work in light of principles, rather than to induce in him a recognition that certain special methods are good and certain other special methods bad" (p.335).

Third, the roles and purposes of course work and field experiences in teacher education also must be critically examined. Because of the importance of role-playing in the professional development of teachers, field experience-based learning is the most significant event in the preservice teacher's professional preparation. However, field experiences pose several difficulties for teacher educators. As illustrated in this research, field experiences promote a utilitarian perspective in preservice teachers. This utilitarian perspective is demonstrated in a "trial and error" approach to teaching. Sanders and McCutcheon (1984) point out that teachers rarely take actions that do not make sense to themselves, but that preservice teachers are faced with two significant limitations when performing in the field: "(1) they are not able to perceive and interpret the professionally significant features of the situation, and (2) they lack the knowledge that enables the practitioner to choose actions appropriate

in these circumstances for the purpose of producing desired consequences" (pp. 4-5).

For many preservice teachers, the broader questions of the field, such as the nature of learning or the role of the school in society, are artificial and separated from the real world activities of the teacher and activities involving these broader questions are viewed as only important as part of meeting teacher education course work requirements. This divorce between the scholarship and method of teaching should be addressed through close coordination of the field and course work components of teacher education. Dewey (1904/1964) noted that the twin problems of developing an intellectual method of applying subject-matter and mastering techniques of class instruction and management are not independent and isolated problems. Unfortunately, the present organization of the teacher education program encourages the separation of these problems into theory-oriented course work and management-oriented field experiences. Teacher educators should strive to link the goals of mastery of teaching techniques and provide a foundation for professional development.

Meeting this goal would require changes in the curriculum and learning experiences provided in preservice teacher education. While recent comprehensive plans for the reform of teacher education have addressed the integration of theory and practice (e.g., The Holmes Group, 1986), the following selected recommendations regarding the implementation of theory and practice in teacher education are made as a result of the findings of this research. First, teacher education should provide opportunities for the study and application of action research methods by preservice teachers. The action research cycle involves discourse (planning and reflection) and practice (observation and action) and provides a structure

for integrating theoretical and practical inquiry into teaching. Recent literature on reflective or inquiry oriented teacher education attempts to combine the elements of action research with teacher education (e.g., Ross & Hannay, 1986; Tom, 1985). Second, organization of teacher education classes into cohort groups would provide a support network that respondents reported missing from their teacher education experience as well as a context within which to share analyses of their own and others' practice. Fullan (1985) suggests that, "stimulating individual reflection in relation to action, and collective (two or more people) sharing of an analysis of this practice based reflection is at the heart of reforms in teacher education" (p. 205). Lastly, a laboratory or clinical approach to teacher education would allow preservice teachers in methods and/or subject courses to work closely with classroom teachers and university teacher educators in integrating the theory and practice of teaching. The goal of laboratory/clinical teacher education would not be to give working command of the necessary tools of teaching (i.e., techniques of instruction and management), but rather to provide opportunities for action and reflection (Dewey, 1904/1964).

There are major barriers to be overcome if these curriculum changes are to be implemented and have a lasting impact on the profession, including: (a) time constraints of baccalaureate teacher education programs, (b) establishment of collaborative relationships between universities and the schools, (c) reallocation of resources and responsibilities necessary to establish laboratory/clinical settings for teacher education, (d) staff development programs to provide training for university professors and classroom teachers work in the laboratory/clinical settings, (e) gradual induction teaching, and (f)

career-long professional development.

These recommendations represent minimal issues for consideration in light of the conclusions of this study. What should no longer be ignored is the active role of the individual in mediating the curriculum of teaching. Excellence in the schools cannot be achieved without quality teachers and quality teachers must have a platform for professional growth. By recognizing this fact and providing preservice teachers with the initial tools for professional growth and a support network for continued growth, an important step can be taken toward the goal of excellence in the schools.

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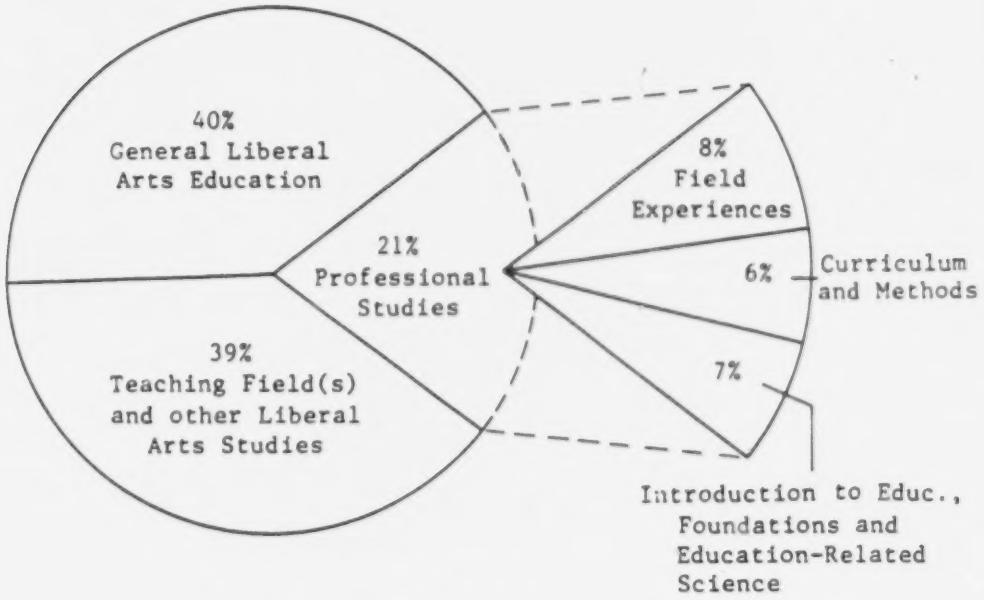
FOOTNOTES

[1] See Ross (1986) for a complete discussion of the processes of teacher perspective development observed in this study.

[2] At the time of the follow-up interviews, several respondents had advanced from their course work into student teaching. As a result, the follow-up interviews provided more information regarding the teaching practices of these respondents. Of the five respondents in this category, three identified inquiry as a primary teaching strategy during student teaching.

TYPICAL SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM (KLUENDER, 1984)



SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM INVESTIGATED

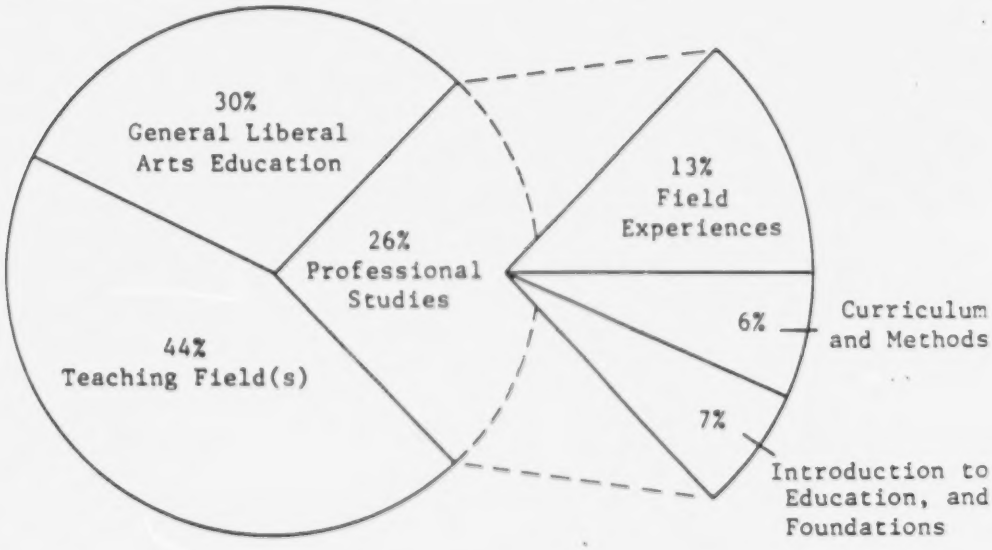


Figure 1: Comparison of Secondary Social Studies Program Investigated in this Study with Typical Secondary Education Program